AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-22 (Cancelled).

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing an agglutination reagent for detecting typhoid comprising:

(a) preparing an antibody specific to a Flagellin gene of *Salmonella* typhi;

(b) preparing a latex particle suspension; and

(c) coating a latex particle with said antibody specific to said Flagellin gene of *Salmonella* typhi;

wherein said antibody specific to the Flagellin gene of *Salmonella* typhi is prepared according to a method comprising:

(i) raising a hyper immune sera against a purified protein encoded by a Flagellin gene specific to *Salmonella* typhi, and

(ii) separating said antibody specific to the Flagellin gene of *Salmonella* typhi from said hyper immune sera;

wherein said latex particle suspension is prepared according to a method ~~comprising~~ consisting essentially of:

(i) mixing 1% carboxylated latex particles and a 40 mM 2-N morpholinoethane sulphonic acid (MES) buffer of pH 5.5 to ~~6.0~~ 6.5 in a ratio of 1:1, washing with a 20 mM MES buffer of pH 5.5 thereby forming a washed latex particle, and

(ii) adding a 1-ethyl-3 (3-dimethyl-amino propyl) carbodiimide hydrochloride (EDC) in a 20 mM MES buffer of pH 5.5 to said washed latex particle in a ratio of 1:1 , washing with a 20 mM MES buffer (pH 5.5); and

wherein said latex particle is coated according to a method consisting essentially of:

(i) reacting said antibody specific to the Flagellin gene of *Salmonella* typhi with said washed latex particle thereby forming an antibody specific to the Flagellin gene of Salmonella typhi coated latex particle,

(ii) stopping the reacting step (i) by adding 1M glycine (pH 11.0) , and

(iii) washing said antibody specific to the Flagellin gene of *Salmonella* typhi coated latex particle with a washing buffer ~~comprised~~ consisting essentially of 50 mM glycine, pH 8.5; 0.03% surfactant and 0.05% sodium azide.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): An agglutination reagent for rapid and early detection of typhoid, comprising a carboxylated latex particle suspended in a storage buffer, wherein the carboxylated latex particle coated consists essentially of ~~with~~ an antibody specific to a Flagellin gene.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The agglutination reagent as claimed in claim 24, wherein the size of the said latex particles is 0.88 to 0.90 μm.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The agglutination reagent as claimed in claim 24, wherein the said storage buffer is comprised of 50 mM glycine pH 8.5, 1.0% bovine serum albumin, 0.03% surfactant, 0.1% sodium azide and 0.01% thimerosal.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The agglutination reagent for rapid and early detection of typhoid as claimed in claim 24, wherein said antibody is an immunoglobulin fraction of a hyper immune sera raised against a protein encoded by a Flagellin gene specific to *Salmonella* typhi, and wherein said storage buffer is a 50 mM phosphate buffer.

Claim 28 (Withdrawn): A kit for rapid and early detection of typhoid comprising 1% agglutination reagent as claimed in claim 24 suspended in storage buffer, glass slides, droppers, wooden sticks and positive and negative controls.